



16721

MAR 29 1996

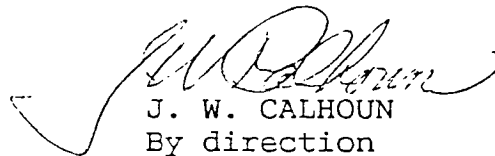
From: Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District
To: Distribution

Subj: FIRST CLASS PILOT LICENSING POLICY

1. Within the Eighth District, it has been policy to accept qualifying service on tug-barge combinations of more than 1600 gross tons (combined tonnage) for up to 50% of the route specific service requirements for an unlimited tonnage first class pilots license. The balance had to be obtained on self-propelled vessels over 1600 gross tons. Effective immediately, Eighth District Regional Examination Centers shall allow 100% of the route specific service experience for a first class pilots license to be obtained on tug-barge combinations above 1600 gross tons. Pilots licenses issued to personnel who gained more than 50% of their route specific service experience on tug-barge combinations over 1600 gross tons shall be limited to service on tug-barge combinations or to self-propelled vessels of 4000 gross tons or less. To increase tonnage to unlimited, the licensee must document 30 round trips over the route, 20 of which were obtained on a greater than 1600 gross ton Integrated Tug and Barge or self-propelled vessel.

2. This expansion of existing policy is the result of research prompted by a letter from The Delta Queen Steamboat Company expressing concern regarding the increasing difficulty of finding mariners with the requisite experience to obtain first class pilotage. It became evident that experience gained on barge tows can qualify an individual to safely operate self-propelled vessels of not more than 4000 gross tons.

3. Questions regarding this matter may be directed to CDR TETREAU, Chief, Merchant Vessel Safety Branch at (504) 589-6271.


J. W. CALHOUN
By direction

Dist: All Eighth District MSOs and RECs
D2(m)